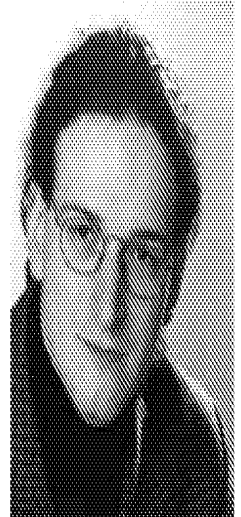


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Thema: Similarity Search in XML Data

Abstract:

The objective of my work is to help bridging the gap between the expressiveness of structured queries and the vagueness of information retrieval with respect to XML data.

I introduce the simple query language *approXML*, which supports hierarchical, Boolean-connected query patterns. The interpretation of *approXML* queries is founded on cost-based query transformations. The summary cost of a sequence of transformations measures the similarity between a query and the data. The similarity score is used to *rank* the results. The language allows the renaming of query elements, the insertion of elements into the query, and the deletion of a restricted set of query elements. Each type of transformation has its intuitive semantics: The renaming of a query element *changes* the search context of a query part. The insertion of a query element restricts a query part to a *more specific* context. Finally, the deletion of a query element changes the search space to a *more general* context. The costs of the basic transformations renaming, insertion, and deletion are specified by the a domain expert. All results of an *approXML* query can be computed in polynomial -- typically sublinear -- time with respect to the database size.

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